
Memorial Note

JACQUES TOUCHARD, 1885–1968

On September 5, 1968, Jacques Touchard died in Lausanne, Switzerland. This brief notice of his life and his mathematical work is made for his combinatorial friends and admirers.

He was born in Switzerland August 19, 1885, of distinguished parents; his father at one time was the French Ambassador to Russia. His secondary studies were done in Paris, where he became an engineer of l'École Centrale des Arts et Manufactures and l'École supérieure d'Électricité. His later work, for the Société Westinghouse and the Matériel Téléphonique, took him both to the United States and to Russia and was interrupted by World War I, in which, as an aviator, he earned the two citations, le Croix de Guerre and le Légion d'Honneur. He married in 1920 and had three children, Monique, André, and Anne-Marie; the notation $a(x)$ for the polynomial whose coefficients are the Stirling numbers of the second kind was his way of remembering Anne-Marie (who died in 1942). Later he spent some time in Alexandria, as an engineer for la Compagnie Lebon, during which several mathematical papers were published. In 1935 he settled in Lausanne, intent on a quiet mathematical life. But World War II came, and with it the French resistance movement (he earned a Médaille de la Résistance), so that it was 1946 before he could relax in the friendly atmosphere of the Université de Lausanne, and l'Association des Mathématiciens Rhodaniens.

A complete bibliography of his mathematical papers follows. Of these, the ones of direct combinatorial interest are those numbered 8, 10, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22; 16, "Sur les cycles des substitutions," I regard as his magnum opus. Chapter 4 of my book on combinatorial analysis was designated as an introduction to it and is far from having exhausted its many delights. Others like 9 and 24 move to the adjoining area of the "higher arithmetic," i.e., number theory, indispensable to the enumerative combinatorialist. All are marked by order, elegance, and simplicity.

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John Riordan

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